News Release
Ministry of Northern Development and Mines

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Provincial Investment Helps Northwest Shape Economic Development Strategies

Attracting International Investment Key To Growing Northwest Economy

THUNDER BAY – Northwestern Ontario municipalities continue to define their future investment attraction priorities with the help of the Ontario government's GO North Investor Program, Northern Development and Mines Minister Rick Bartolucci announced today.

"The region's ability to sell itself on the international investment stage begins with well laid out plans that enable it to focus on economic sectors upon which future opportunities can be pursued," said Bartolucci. "We are pleased to support our municipal partners as they better prepare themselves to identify and secure new economic development opportunities that exist in the global community."

Thunder Bay, Oliver Paipoonge, Marathon and Kenora recently received a total of $15,000 from GO North's Northern Community Investment Readiness (NCIR) initiative to work with the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association (NOMA) to develop economic development strategies intended to foster a more investment ready climate across the Northwest. The partners looked at how the key drivers of the regional economy can be levered to have greater positive impact on the region and its ability to attract investment. The strategies produced are being used by NOMA in further consultations with other key economic development players in the region as it develops Forging the Future – An Economic Vision for Northwestern Ontario, a strategy for pursuing economic growth in the region.

"Our government is committed to promoting the strategic advantages of Northern Ontario and to help northern communities prepare for international investment opportunities," said Thunder Bay-Atikokan MPP Bill Mauro. "We are partnering with our communities and businesses in the North to attract the kind of investment that will generate long term prosperity."

"This project demonstrates how large and small communities can work together in an effort to bring jobs and greater wealth to the region by identifying new opportunities for economic development," said Michael Gravelle, Thunder Bay-Superior North MPP. "We must continue to get the message out to the world that Northern Ontario is an excellent place in which to invest in new ventures."

NCIR gives eligible communities, economic development corporations, and First Nations up to $5,000 per application for the development of essential and strategic community tools to help increase investment readiness and attract investors. Communities can also partner together on projects and subsequently receive up to $5,000 for each eligible applicant. A key component of the GO North

Investor Program, this initiative promotes a strong investment attraction climate in Northern Ontario. The program is administered by the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines with assistance from the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association and the Federation of Northern Ontario Municipalities.

Other McGuinty government initiatives that are supporting northern communities include:

• Improving northern highways by investing more than $1.8 billion over five years in highway expansions and improvements through the Northern Ontario Highways Strategy
• Contributing $60 million annually to the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund to support community and economic development.

To date, more than $328,000 in NCIR funding has been provided to 27 initiatives helping to enhance the investment readiness of communities across the North. GO North is part of the Northern Prosperity Plan. The plan is founded on four key pillars including: Strengthening the North and its Communities; Listening to and Serving Northerners Better; Competing Globally; and Providing Opportunities for All.

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